

AMERICAN RESEARCH CENTER IN EGYPT, INCORPORATED

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The Tenth Anniversary of the Center

The Annual Meeting of the Center, to be held at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, on Tuesday, November 15, will be the occasion of the Tenth Anniversary of the Center's corporate existence. A special program has been planned, and it is hoped that as many members as possible will attend. The business meeting, which will be made as brief as possible, will be convened promptly at 2:00 p.m. It will be followed at 3:00 o'clock by an illustrated lecture given by Mr. Dows Dunham on aspects of American archaeological activity in Egypt. Friends of members will be welcomed at this lecture and at the tea offered to members and their guests, which is scheduled for 4:30 o'clock.

Letters from Cairo and the Near East

Members should be extremely grateful to Dr. Scanlon, last season's Director in Cairo for having found time in the course of an all-too-brief journey to the Eastern Islamic countries and to Russia to put down for them some of his impressions. We hope to have from him for the next Newsletter a further account, which will include news of the Congress of Orientalists in Moscow. Dr. Bernard V. Bothmer will also report on the Congress as seen from the Egyptological angle.

Cairo, 4 May, 1960

Dear Members:

We are at the end of a khamsin -- day-long, driving blasts of heat from the desert. This means that we have had only a brief spring coolness and shall be catapulted almost immediately into summer. But in a little over a month, I shall be off on a trip to Syria to check on castles and fortifications, then on for three weeks in Iran and from there to Afghanistan and Tashkent, from where I'll try to get to Samarkand and Bokhara (if visas are forthcoming). August will see me in Moscow for the Congress of Orientalists. Then Leningrad, Warsaw, Vienna, Munich, and Rome -- and back to Cairo by mid-September.

Before getting down to other news, I should like to correct two mistakes in my communications for Newsletter 37. On page 3, sixth line from





bottom, "The round towers of Saladin's original walls, built in 1179", should read "begun in 1179;" and on page 8, last paragraph, I erroneously gave the Arab chronicle edited by Drs. Al-Munajjid and Römer as that of Ibn Aybak instead of Ibn al-Dawadari -- the confusion was caused by the fact that the biographical dictionary of Ibn Aybak, a basic source for the Mamluk period, is being published under the same auspices and at the same press.

I also forgot, in my last letter, to list among my other activities a lecture I gave to the group of American students who are substituting a trip around the world for their final year in high school. The experience was at once stimulating and nerve-wracking. The teen-agers took down every word I said, found an immediate local application for the past I galloped over in an hour and a half, and bombarded me with thoughtful and intelligent questions. The American Friends of the Middle East who, jointly with the Ministry of Education, sponsored the stay of the group in Cairo, provided a scholarship for an Egyptian boy to join the group. I can think of no finer example of inter-cultural activity.

Early in March, the Press Attaché of the American Embassy asked me to take a very different group around the walls of Cairo. This consisted of American editors and commentators, who were on the last lap of a tour that had taken them literally around Africa. They were most grateful for the tour, found the morning, as one of them said, a welcome respite from "perpetual politicking." The representatives of the Egyptian press assigned to them were also most interested; though they had lived their entire lives in Cairo, they had never seen these particular Muslim monuments. I did my bit of "politicking," but for the Center: I added to each of the visitors' portfolios a paper about the activities of our organization, in the hope that they might remember the name of the American Research Center in Egypt if it ever crossed their desks.

Last week, the Poles inaugurated their Archaeological Institute in Heliopolis with a reception given to Mr. Okasha, the Minister of Culture and National Guidance, and other representatives of the scholarly community by Professor Michaeolowski, Director of the Institute, His Excellency the Polish Ambassador, Mr. Krajewski, and Professor Tarski, the Rector of the University of Warsaw. Drawings of the Polish excavations at Tell Athrib and Palmyra were displayed. Next season, the Poles will start work at a new site, and a second Islamicist, in addition to Dr. Kubiak, who is administrative director of the Institute, will be added to the resident staff.

The Austrians hope to open their cultural center early next fall and it is expected that the Czechs will soon follow suit. Hungary is investigating the scholarly possibilities of Cairo, and the Japanese are thinking of a domicile for the archaeologists they will send into Nubia next season. To complement their archaeological work in Egypt, the West German government is contemplating an Islamic Research Center in Beirut for next year, under the direction of Dr. Hans Römer, who recently completed his term of residence at the German Institute. The acceleration of activity on the scholarly and



archaeological fronts during the past year and a half makes it seem all the more important that we should develop in Cairo an American equivalent to our fine establishments in Rome, Athens, and Jerusalem. The nucleus for such an Institute is, of course, present in the Center.

Dr. Hans Gottschalk, professor of Arabic at the University of Vienna and author of the recent monograph on the Ayyubid Sultan, al-Malik al-Kamil, visited Cairo for a fortnight early in April. His visit coincided with that of Dr. Kenneth Cragg, editor of The Muslim World, who delivered a most interesting lecture on "The Principles of Islamic Study." His title was a bit misleading, for he really spoke on approaches to, rather than principles of, Islamic study. He discussed particularly the quest of Islamic scholars and teachers, particularly in the religious schools, to find new meanings for a cumbersome, period-defined terminology. His exegesis, founded on a wide knowledge of relevant texts, spoke more to the needs of tolerant hearts in the modern world than to those of the orthodox mind. Later in April, Dr. Walter Braune of the Free University of Berlin gave a conference on the contemporary religious quest, emphasizing the position of the Islamic way of life, seeking to adapt itself to modern needs. Our final visitor of note was Dr. William Brinner of the University of California at Berkeley, a Mamluk expert having his first glimpse of the Middle East.

My own work progresses at an uneven pace. The American University at Cairo has set up a press, and at the invitation of the Director of the School of Oriental Studies, I submitted my thesis for possible publication. They have accepted it, and will print the Arabic text, together with the translation, thus making this Mamluk treatise on the art of war available to persons interested in the history of mediaeval Europe. I shall spend most of the remainder of my time here in getting the manuscript into shape for publication. Next season, when Mr. Millet will have relieved me of the duties of the directorship of the Center, I shall work through the volumes of the Creswell library. I also intend to prepare a corpus of Arabic manuscripts on the arts of war; it is primarily to collect materials for this corpus from the Moscow, Leningrad and Tashkent libraries that I wish to attend the Congress of Orientalists in Russia this year. An article of mine will appear in the next issue of the Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire, a volume of studies presented to Professor Gaston Wiet.

I feel that I should apologize to the members for having so little of general interest to report. There is nothing very dramatic in an account of a daily round of studies and contacts with fellow scholars. The happenings outside the world of scholarship are quite adequately conveyed in the press. I might add that I am convinced of a basic good will in this country toward the United States, though it is sometimes hard to define in a rhythm and tempo so very different from our own.

Sincerely,

George T. Scanlon



Isfahan, 4 July, 1960

Dear Members:

It seems odd to be celebrating our Independence Day while in purdah. Today and tomorrow coincide with the solemn Muslim Shi'ite feast of the Ashura, the tenth day of the month of Muharram, when the Prophet's grandson, Husayn, was killed on the battle field of Kerbela. All non-Muslims are advised by the government to stay indoors or, if they must go out, to make themselves as inconspicuous as possible. The American colony are celebrating the Fourth of July within their compounds, and I, a guest of the Vice-Consul, must do the same. I must confess that I am disappointed, for I should like to see the liturgical parade re-enacting the battle and the death, and the ritual self-flagellation of the devout. Such a combination of drama and ritual is not to be encountered in the Sunni communities of Islam (though one should perhaps except the dervish and Sufi rites, which, however, seem to be fast disappearing).

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Accompanied by Mr. Ralph Esmerian, a sophomore from Princeton, who is handling the photography of our journey, I have visited the following places: Damascus, Aleppo, Latakiah-Ras Shamra, Tortosa, Krak des Chevaliers; Tripoli, Byblos-Jebail, Beirut, Sidon, Baalbek, Pasargadae, Persepolis, Naqsh-i Rostam, Shiraz. After the feast, we shall return to Tehran, whence we go northeast to Tabriz, from where we hope to visit the Pennsylvania dig at Hasanlu, and then northwest to Meshed, taking off from there into Afghanistan and northern Pakistan.

To make some sense of this catalogue of places, I have time only for general impressions, with a few high lights.

It was obvious that Syria's overriding concern at the present is economic. This is her third year of drought, and the omens for this summer's crops have yet to be read. Throughout our Syrian and Lebanese journey, we used buses and service-taxis, so we were able to talk and listen to the local population. The people are puzzled and deeply stirred by what has happened to them, and as we saw the meager green of the fabled bend of the Fertile Crescent we could understand their plight. That wheat has to be imported and that looms are standing idle in some of the cotton mills -- these are odd rewards for the patience and thrift of the peasants and town craftsmen.

Paradoxically, it has been Egypt that has come into the breach with all possible aid -- paradoxically, because it has been predicted that union with Egypt would mean for Syria increased calls upon her reserves and resources. On the contrary; in spite of the drought there is little actual distress in Syria other than the psychological distress caused by seeing hard labor go for nothing. Syria has, moreover, maintained much of her autonomy within the framework of the United Arab Republic. There has been no "Egyptianizing" of governmental agencies, educational institutions, cultural activities. The currencies are separate and economic development is entirely in the hands of



local authorities. Such restrictions as have been imposed on economic life seem to derive more from the drought than from directives from Cairo. Only two things were sacrificed by the "Northern Region" in the merger, and the importance of these is belittled or stressed according to individual bias. One is the loss of internal political life through the dissolving of political parties and their replacement by a Syrian branch of the Egyptian National Union; the other is the foreswearing of any independent foreign policy. If the present conditions of autonomy continue, it can hardly be said that the union is of great disadvantage for Syria.

One autonomous aspect of government is Syria's antiquities service. The present director, Dr. Salim Bey Abd al-Haqq, has been with the service for more than twenty years and has maintained a high standard in matters as diverse as museum administration, restoration and maintenance, and new excavation. Two excavations, which he is anxious to have completed and in which he feels there are discoveries still to be made, are that at Jabal Sais, originally worked by Sauvaget, and that at Harun al-Rashid's second capital, Raqqa on the Euphrates. The work of Storm Rice at Harran indicates how exciting and rewarding excavation in the northern Euphrates area can be. Dr. Abd al-Haqq expressed his regret for the apparent lack of interest in Syro-Islamic archaeology on the part of Americans.

My own interest in the architecture of the Crusading and Mamluk periods was vastly instructed by the fortifications at Damascus and Aleppo, the Crusader church at Tortosa, and the Krak, better known locally as Qal'at al-Hisn or Hisn al-Akrad. The citadel at Aleppo is a fine example of Muslim military architecture. Both Baybars and Qala'un added considerably to the original Ayyubid fortress, which commands the entire town from the only eminence within it; the beauty and utility of the barbican and approaches of Qala'un can not be appreciated from photographs. It is a pity that the erection of high buildings is blocking the view of this great monument. While the town planners are sparing the citadel itself, they are depriving it of the majesty of position it has enjoyed since the twelfth century.

We saw Margat (or Margab) only from the road. This fortress (at present inaccessible) commanding the passes to the sea seems literally pinned to a summit of awesome height. Together with the Krak, Sayhun (or Saône), and the keep-type fortresses between the mountain ranges, it lent strength to the Counts of Tripoli, rendering them less liable to Muslim incursions than were the Kings of Jerusalem and the Antiochine lords. Simply to see it from a distance was to gain in understanding of the pattern of Crusading life and warfare.

I had seen the Krak des Chevaliers first in 1951. This time, I saw it with a new eye, for the studies I have been pursuing since then made it loom ever larger, historically, militarily, aesthetically. Too much has been written about it for me to add anything new. I can only say that it is exactly as has been described, the French restorations of 1935 having strengthened it for the future without having taken anything from its historic lineaments. T. E. Lawrence thought it the most exciting castle in the world; the Muslim beseigers of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries called it the "bone in the



throat." It has to be seen. For all this cycle of buildings, I can recommend Robin Fedden's Crusader Castles as an entertaining and dependable guide. I'll continue this chronicle tomorrow.

Sincerely,

George T. Scanlon

Kabul, 13 July, 1960

Dear Members:

As you see, tomorrow never came. Since I was bemoaning the fact of wasting two precious days immured because of the Ashura, my host took matters in hand and together we went to see the Kuhrang Dam. En route, we passed through three villages engaged in ritual celebration of the feast, so I was able to gain some idea of the dramatic event.

Now back to the chronicle.

Lebanon is beauty and freedom. Its beauty is incontestable: the concurrence of mountain and sea, the Lebanon range, the lovely Biqa' valley, and then the Anti-Lebanons, revealed singly or in pairs; the variety of the coastal towns and villages, cropping out of the mountain-side, in the geometry of what is almost a Cezanne landscape -- all these leave no room for argument. Its freedom is a purely subjective matter. Seen from outside Lebanon, it seems to be a freedom that is anarchic, selfish, out of geographical context, a freedom unparalleled in the entire Middle East, from Casablanca to Karachi, from Adrianople to Aden. All these adjectives are true, but once inside Lebanon, they seem totally beside the point. It is a very haven of diversity and should be preserved in a world rapidly becoming monolithic. I admire Lebanon for having maintained herself and her freedom in the face of Logic and Historical Necessity.

I will single out only two among the places we visited. First, there is Ba'albek, which seems more beautiful each time I see it. This may shock those who prefer their ruins to remain untouched. But during the ten years since I first visited the site the restorations have proceeded slowly and reasonably and have resulted in giving a context to the style and an impression of the relatedness of the buildings. Very little has been added -- the fallen pieces have merely been fitted together again and strengthened where necessary. Another five years should see the site fully restored, but only with the materials now on the ground. The temple of Jupiter will never be roofed, but a few more of its columns will be raised and the pediment completed. The necessities of the Festival require a wooden stage and apron in the so-called Temple of Bacchus, but these are removed when no longer needed -- the Department of Antiquities has resisted any move to install a permanent auditorium.

I had never before seen Anjar, an Ummayyad palace in the Biqa' of the same genre as those at Khirbet al-Mafjir, Mshatta, Jabal Sais, Qasr al-Khair,



etc. The bare outlines were revealed by the original excavation, but new work, started last year by Amir Shihab, Director of Antiquities, has uncovered stone and stucco carvings with a striking variety of floral and vine motifs, which are most important for the study of the evolution of Islamic decorative styles, adding as they do to the evidence of the palaces I have mentioned above and of the mosaics in the Dome of the Rock and the Ummayyad mosque at Damascus. The original position of the sculptured fragments in the palace complex can only be guessed at, and I do not believe that enough of the structure survives to make it possible to locate them. Further digging can hardly give more than a surer ground plan, which probably can be as well ascertained by an aerial photograph and comparison with other Ummayyad palaces.

The place is of amazing size -- much larger than I had imagined it to be. It had an outwork of strong, undressed stone walls, with square towers at regular intervals. Since no parapet remains, it is difficult to determine the height of the walls, though the foundations of one corner wall go down through fourteen courses of stone. Even this may be misleading, for the land appears to slant, and no other section of the wall has been uncovered to the base. At some distance within this outer wall there seems to be a second wall, which might indicate a double line of fortification, though enough of it has not yet been excavated to show whether it is actually a second line of defense or merely the wall of an attendant building. Here again, aerial photography might help. While the problem of reconstructing the palace as a whole seems hopeless, further work might reveal the entire defense and living plan of the structure. If the second wall can be proved to exist, it would form a unique feature.

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Even if the traveler is well read in the history and geography of Iran, it may take a while for the country to make a favorable impression on him: his first impressions are bound to be of dust and distance. The country has not a single first-class black-topped road. Moreover, the cost of living is incredibly high, and one is nagged by a concern for those millions of its inhabitants whose daily wage hardly reaches fifty rials a day (there are approximately seventy-five rials to a dollar). Much of the country's past and present can be understood in terms of the distance separating the major cities, leaving them in isolation and localness, difficult of total control from Tehran. I had always thought that Isfahan and Shiraz were, if not "Twin Cities," at least reasonably close. Yet there are nine hundred-odd kilometers between Tehran and Shiraz, with Isfahan exactly midway between them, and about a thousand kilometers separate Tehran and Meshed. One can easily see how difficult it was, before the days of air-transport, to control these widely separated regions. Each of them shows an entirely different tenor of life, of expression, of art. The two greatest governing dynasties of Iran, the Achaemenid and the Safavid, had fruitful life-spans of a little more than two centuries each. Each wave of conquest in the Islamic period was only an external flux imposed upon a regional continuum. We are too close to the Qajar dynasty of the nineteenth century and the Pahlevi dynasty of the twentieth, to be able to see whether or not they have been able to impose the idea of a single nation on these disparate provinces. The dust separating them



may confuse the understanding, but it is hardly able to veil the fact that Iran is not yet compact in spirit.

Except for its airport, Tehran did not please me at all. Only a perverse Qajar would have set his capital in the plain, when the mountains were at hand to welcome it. Tehran has wide streets, execrable palaces and mosques, staid unjoyful architecture, and one superb restaurant. It was a pleasure to leave the capital and go toward the essential, historic Iran: north to the Caspian, west to Tabriz and its environs, east to Meshed and the marches of old, but especially south to Isfahan and Shiraz and the Gulf.

We went to the Caspian only for a short holiday, during which we were able to note little more than differences in dress, speech, and attitude. It is an area that is undergoing development in agriculture and (I believe) in mining, but it remains the seaside resort for the country. It is strange to see the thick, almost jungle-like vegetation, and the tea and rice plantations that were the goal of Reza Shah's last period -- one of unsheathed avarice. On the land side of the Elburz range the Americans are building a dam at Karaj to supply an expanding Tehran with drinking and sewage water. This should serve, with accompanying roads, to bring the mid-Caspian area more closely into the economic life of the country.

Isfahan was, for me, the realization of a vividly precise dream. I had studied its development, its layout, its monuments, and needed neither map nor guide book. With the exception of the palace Hasht Bihist - "the Eight Paradises"- of the seventeenth-eighteenth century, I found everything in its appointed place, indestructibly alive in spite of the devastations of narrow mullahs, vengeful governors, restorers, and town-planners. The Safavi Versailles is there in essence, and it is a mighty thing. It has been reproduced countless times in words and paintings and photographs, but the reality is so much more than can be conveyed. For example, the great porch of Ali Qapu is larger and more complex than pictures of it allow, and it is as important to see it from the rear where one can get the sense of the building, as it is to look at it from the front, where one receives the full impact of its grandeur. One must actually see Isfahan -- see the Rud rushing through the piers of the Khwaju bridge; see the people of the city taking their tea on its broad and shady platforms, just as Chardin described the scene; count the double set of arches of Ali Verdi Khan's fabled bridge. And where does one find a book that gives in a single compass the subtle variety of Safavid tiling?

I spent a whole day with an army officer riding around what I should like to call the "oasis" of Isfahan. It is more extensive than I had thought, and shows why, throughout its history, Isfahan was considered such a prize. Later in the week, I rode through an incredibly fertile valley, following the Zayandeh Rud to its source, and saw the Kuhrang Dam, which trebles its flow by diverting the Kuhrang river through a tunnel cut through the mountain some six years ago by a Point-Four group. Shah Abbas thought to do the same thing about three hundred and fifty years ago, and his attempt is still to be seen on the mountain side. As a result of the new dam, the whole of the immense valley and the Isfahan "oasis" now have water throughout the year. The valley



and the dam-site in front of the snow-capped Zard-i Kuh are the summer grazing grounds of the Bakhtiyari tribe, who lend local color to a scene of incomparable beauty and charm, with the lake formed by the dam in its necklace of high mountains. In time, the place should form a sort of Swiss mountain retreat. Seeing it, is now well worth the difficulty of getting there.

Shiraz is a lovely city, its people perhaps the gentlest and most urbane of all Iran. The Muslim monuments -- none very old, but with a few good examples of "provincial" Safavid architecture -- are in a shocking state of repair. Saadi's tomb is gauche and tasteless, an eyesore; that of Hafiz, while hardly a delight, does not appall-- and that is about the best that can be said of any modern Middle Eastern architecture. But nearby is Persepolis, staggering in its dimensions and variety of structure. The place had been in my imagination since my schooldays, and I felt fulfilled by the reality. We visited also Naqsh-i Rostam and Pasargada and gained from the three sites some vision of the might, cunning, and glorie of the Achaemenid kings. If one adds to these monuments the Sassanian rock-reliefs, the Seljuk and Safavid achievements, one can understand how the Iranian is mesmerized by his past.

In this region, American agronomists have found enough water, by going down fifty meters or so, to irrigate a thousand acres of leased land. Similar wells have been dug all over the countryside, and as a result the arable land has been almost doubled. A village extension service has been inaugurated and rural sanitation greatly improved. Both here and in Isfahan the Americans seemed very much a part of the community and they have achieved a great deal in the realms of education, agriculture, and medicine. The medical faculty of the University of Shiraz has been especially strengthened, and the Shah has shown much interest in the development of the university as a whole, which he desires to be modeled on the best of American types. The universities of the south, Isfahan and Ahwaz, are to be reconstructed along similar lines.

We hope to have a week in northern Pakistan and then to return here for our Russian visas and fly to Tashkent on August first. I'll save Afghanistan until later.

Sincerely,

George T. Scanlon

Cairo, 15 September 1960

Dear Members:

Letters should be delivered as promised. I should have written from Munich, but instead I gave myself over to art galleries and operas, visits to Venice and the Friuli plain, and a stop-over in Rome, which made me more vagrant than ever. I excused myself by thinking that my impressions had not "jelled" and that you deserved more than a catalogue. But after a hectic week in Egypt, I know that there will never be sufficient tranquillity for recollections and that further procrastination will only result in bad faith, bad



manners, and worse style; so I hope you will accept this hurried account, offered in contrite humility.

We liked Afghanistan very much. The present there seems greater than the past. There is something very genuine about the country and the people, which is more important than the statistics that seem to reveal remoteness and backwardness. In the midst of warring political influences, Afghanistan has preserved her independence and pride and courage. Her people are a conglomerate of racial strains and tribal stocks, but in her drive for respectable national individuality she has made a local dialect of Persian -- Pushtu -- universal; and indeed it is the natural language of most of her inhabitants. Her resources are not great, but sufficient, and during the past five years she has learned much about husbanding and developing them. Though her desires for the future are rather diffuse, they are wholesome and merit respect...but I must get on with my story. For further comment on the present position of Afghanistan, let me refer you to Professor Toynbee's penetrating article, which appeared in the New York Herald-Tribune during August, and to the reports of Dr. Louis Dupree of the American Universities Field Service.

Circumstances prevented us from going to Herat, the great Islamic center of the country, but I am sure that I could have added little to the report by Dr. Williams on the monuments remaining in that great Islamic center, which appeared in Newsletter No. 34. We did get to Kandahar and were able to see at first hand the marvelous development of the Helmand Valley, where an immense irrigation and reclamation project, initiated by the Afghan government, has been carried out by the American firm of Morris-Knutsen. This has entailed the damming of two rivers, the Arghandab and the Helmand, whose waters formerly flowed into useless swamps in the border area of Afghanistan and Iran. The supervision of the project is now in the hands of Afghans, most of whom have been trained in the United States, with the aid of an expert and dedicated Point-Four team.

For the archaeologist and anthropologist, Afghanistan is a rich, practically undiscovered, bourn. As has happened so often in the Middle East, the French were the first to put any concentrated effort into the area. In addition to recording the Islamic monuments, they uncovered Buddhist, Classical, and East Christian sites. Schlumberger's work at Lashkagar Bazar, a site fortified by the Ghaznevids to protect the route leading from Sistan to India, is well known. The fortifications there are more extensive than I had realized, stretching at one point for almost three kilometers in a straight line. The paintings found in the palace area have been removed to Kabul and are not yet accessible to scholars. However, one high, broad arch at the far end of the mud wall, though it has been restored with some kind of ugly cement or concrete, still stands as a solitary record of splendor. One result of his extensive excavation has been a concern on the part of Persian archaeologists to find linkages with Iran. This season, an Italian team will begin work at Sistan, and may provide some flesh to put on the skeletal history of linkages of the southwest with the Indus basin.

For the past three seasons, the Italians have been working at Ghazni, where they have discovered the floor of what appears to be the Great Palace



of the time of Mahmud the Great or of Ma'sud, late tenth or early eleventh century. Professors Tucci and Bombacci have supervised the work, and they have been accompanied by prehistorians, who have unearthed some very early pieces of metal and pottery. Most interesting, however, is the discovery of the outlines of a Buddhist stupa, which puts Ghazni in the chain of settlements linking the Indus plateau with the far reaches of the Central Asian plain. Professor Schlumberger is continuing the investigation of Buddhist presence at Sur Kotal, and delivered a fine paper on last year's finds at that site to the Moscow Congress of Orientalists.

The crescent of Buddhist penetration is incredible in its variety and endurance, as is attested by room after room in the Kabul Museum. There one senses also the last touch of Alexander in the Asian air, when Buddhist images take on a slight but unmistakable Hellenism. To have felt the Conqueror's presence in Persepolis and then to find it in the valleys of the Hindu Kush is to bring history as close as it can be to the present. It is small wonder that the Middle East has been so imbued with the career of Alexander that it has adopted him into its history, its cults and their enlivening myths.

The Ghurids managed to defeat the Ghaznevids toward the end of the eleventh century, thus allowing a breathing spell for the hard-pressed Islamic communities in Iran and India. Yet we have known very little of the non-military activities of this dynasty. The French discovered a solitary minaret at Jam, halfway between Herat and Kabul, and a Ghurid settlement of indefinite dimension at Firuz Kul. These can be reached only by traversing an incredible road, then taking to horseback through the hills, and finally by walking to the sites. We did not get there. But what we heard leads to the impression that there was a rich pre-Mongal Muslim culture in this all-but-impenetrable area. And while speaking of impenetrable areas, it is important to note that it was not until the end of the sixteenth century that the hill people north of Jalalabad in Waziristan -- or Kariistan -- were completely Islamized. In the Museum are examples of wooden totemic figures, carved with primitive suavity, which are not unlike the African figurines that have inspired so many modern artists.

In the north is Balkh, reduced to dust by the Mongols and resurrected, not by the Islamicists, but by the prehistorians. It is in this general area, on both sides of the Oxus, that many scholars feel that man the hunter became tamed and urbanized and began the complex pattern of life that is our modern being. Coon and Camman of Pennsylvania worked there, and it is a pity that no other American group has gone back to reap the reward of their promising digging. The Russians are at work on sites running from Ferghana to Tashkent, but it seemed to me that a whole chapter of man's prehistory was waiting to be dug out of the area. And the north provides enough concrete, disparate varieties of tribal and urban settlements to satisfy a whole flush of Ford Foundation anthropologists. The Islamic monuments are, in my opinion, too derivative to be of great interest.

I shall conclude with a word about our visit to the beautiful valley of Bamiyan. It is one of the loveliest spots I have ever seen, with a serenity to match the towering Buddhas carved in the mountain face. A stream runs



through the valley floor and flows through the Hindu Kush to join with others and form the Oxus river. In the calm majesty of that valley, one is at a center of historical geography, vividly aware of the worth of travel -- and of the paucity of one's power to convey the impression. The visit there was more than worth ten hours in a Landrover over roads of awesome rut.

Tashkent and Russia are another story -- and another letter.

Sincerely,

George T. Scanlon

Publications by Members of the Center

Baer, Klaus. Rank and Title in the Old Kingdom: The Structure of the Egyptian Administration in the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties. Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1960, x, 310 p., charts.

Through analysis of the order in which the titles of officials were listed in successive periods of the Late Pyramid Age, Dr. Baer arrives at conclusions concerning the administration of Egypt at the end of the Old Kingdom. His research brings added evidence of the decline of the central administration, which resulted in the chaos following the Sixth Dynasty.

Bothmer, Bernard V. Egyptian Sculpture of the Late Period, by Bernard V. Bothmer, with the collaboration of Hans Wolfgang Müller and Hermann de Meulenaere. Foreword by John D. Cooney. Edited by Elizabeth Riefstahl. Brooklyn, N.Y., The Brooklyn Museum, 1960, 287 p., 110 plates.

This work is a catalogue for the international exhibition of Late Egyptian sculpture which will open at the Brooklyn Museum on October 17, 1960. It is, however, much more than a catalogue. It is a basic discussion of the development of sculptural art during the last six centuries before Christ -- a much neglected and misunderstood period, during which many historically significant and a goodly number of artistically important pieces were produced. Mr. Bothmer, it will be remembered, was Director of the Center in Cairo for two seasons. Formerly at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, he is now Associate Curator in the Department of Ancient Art at the Brooklyn Museum.

Cooney, John D. "Glass Sculpture in Ancient Egypt," in Journal of Glass Studies II, Corning Museum of Glass, Corning, N.Y., 1960, p. 11-43; illus.

Mr. Cooney, Trustee and member of the Executive Committee of the Center,



and Director in Cairo during 1952-1953, has devoted many years to the study of Egyptian glass. Here he discusses the rare sculptures in that material in Egyptian and Western collections. Such sculptures are confined to the New Kingdom. Indeed true glass of any sort hardly exists prior to 1500 or in the period between Dynasty XXI and the Ptolemaic Period. Though a few rare artifacts prove that a knowledge of glass-making was not lost during this long hiatus, from around 1050 to 400 B.C., preference was apparently given to faience. A section of the article discusses sculptures in a glassy faience of post-New Kingdom date, and a concluding section deals with modern forgeries of ancient Egyptian glass sculpture.

Dunham, Dows, and Jozef M. A. Janssen. Semna-Kumma (Second Cataract Forts, v.1), Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 1960, xxxvi, 188 p., 130 plates; maps, plans.

This scholarly volume is the first of two to give the results of the excavations of Nubian fortresses conducted by the late Professor George A. Reisner, director of the Harvard University-Museum of Fine Arts Expedition. The two Middle Kingdom outposts it describes are important for what they contribute to the history of Egypt and to the history of fortification. These strongholds, which served the Egyptians down into the New Kingdom and later, are situated on commanding heights, forming "a 'gateway' on the river, which could control the traffic both by water and by the caravan route along the bank." Since there seems to be a possibility that the region will be flooded with the construction of the new high dam, this record could not have appeared at a more appropriate time. Fortunately, there is a record. Egyptology owes much to Mr. Dunham, the treasurer of the Center, who has published this excellent volume, together with other results of Dr. Reisner's excavations in Nubia described in the series, Royal Cemeteries of Kush.

Grube, Ernst J. "Materialien zum Dioskurides Arabicus," in Aus der Welt der Islamischen Kunst (Festschrift für Ernst Kühnel), 1960, p. 163-194, illus.

Dr. Grube, recently appointed Curator in the Department of Near Eastern Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, is a new member of the Center. In this well-documented and well-illustrated article, he assembles material on the Arabic versions of the Materia Medica by Dioscurides, as illustrative of the continuity of late antique tradition in scholarly texts of the Islamic period and their illustrations.

Simpson, William Kelly. Ed. Cowa Survey: Northeast Africa, Cambridge Massachusetts, 1960.

The "Current Work in Old World Archaeology" and "Current Publications in Old World Archaeology" begun by the Council for Old World Archaeology under the editorship of the late Lauriston Ward, a regretted Trustee of the Center, is here continued for Northeast Africa, under the sub-editorship of Dr. Simpson. Members should find the survey of archaeological work done in



Egypt, the Sudan, and Libya and of publications relating to such work over the period from 1956 to 1958, inclusive, of great value. The enormous task of compiling the available material has been excellently done by Dr. Simpson of Yale University, a Trustee of the Center.

Simpson, William Kelly. "The Hyksos Princess Tany," in Chronique d'Égypte, XXXIV, No. 68, Brussels, 1959, p. 233-239, illus.

Dr. Simpson here describes a fragmentary sculptural inscription bearing the name of a Princess Tany, which forms an addition to the small corpus of monuments relating to the Hyksos court. Since our sources for the Hyksos are largely those of their Egyptian opponents and successors, it is suggested that an investigation of Tell ed-Deb'a (Khata'na), the site in the Eastern Delta from which this fragment comes, might possibly furnish some information about the Hyksos from Hyksos monuments.

Smith, William Stevenson. Ancient Egypt as Represented in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Boston, 1960, 215 p., illus.

This invaluable handbook to the Museum of Fine Arts and introduction to the history of Egyptian art in general now appears in a fourth edition, completely revised and with many new illustrations. Sold at a modest price, it is readily available to students and other persons interested in ancient Egypt, and it would be hard to find any other book of such compact form that would provide a better picture of the civilization of the Nile Valley. It is hardly necessary to bring to the attention of members that Dr. Smith is one of the founding fathers of the Center and is, at present, a Trustee and Executive Vice-President of our organization.

Thomas, Elizabeth. "Terrestrial Marsh and Solar Mat," in Journal of Egyptian Archaeology, 45, Oxford, 1959, p. 38-51, illus.

Miss Thomas, who last season worked in the Theban necropolis under the auspices of the Center, here takes up various problems connected with the unique plans of a solar boat (or boats?) on a ceiling in the tomb of Ramesses VI, and succeeds admirably in clarifying many of the puzzling features they present.

Vermeule, Cornelius C. "Oberlin's Head of an Isis Priest of the Second Century A.D.," in Allen Memorial Art Museum Bulletin, XVII, 1, Oberlin, 1959, p. 7-13, illus.

Indubitably of Roman origin, this head of a priest from Oberlin nevertheless is of interest to historians of Egyptian art, for it carries on "a tradition of veristic portraits with shaven heads...very much older in Egypt than the art created in the Nile Valley by the impact of Macedonian Hellenism or the military expeditions of the close of the Roman Republic."



Notes on Activities of Members

It is with great regret that we must announce that the work in the Theban necropolis begun by Miss Elizabeth Thomas under the auspices of the Center was interrupted by her serious illness. She is continuing, however, to work on her records of the less-known royal burials at Thebes.

We should like again to draw attention to the exhibition "Egyptian Sculpture of the Late Period," which will be on view at the Brooklyn Museum from October 17 until January 10. This show, under the direction of Bernard Bothmer and John D. Cooney, is the first of the kind ever put on by any museum, and includes objects from widely scattered American collections as well as a number from Europe and a generous contribution of sculptures from the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. Members within reach of New York City would be well advised to make an effort to see it.

Two Trustees of the Center have embarked on extra-curricular teaching careers. Bernard V. Bothmer, Associate Curator in the Department of Ancient Art at the Brooklyn Museum, is giving a survey course in Egyptian art at the Institute of Fine Arts of New York University and Henry G. Fischer, Associate Curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, will hold a seminar on Old and Middle Kingdom Sculpture at Columbia University, in connection with a course given by Edith Porada, a member of the Center.

Miss Susan M. Smith writes from California that she is arranging for group-tours to Egypt and would like to bring this to the notice of fellow-members. Tours will be via economy jet, with first-class accommodations in Egypt. She is also planning trips for small groups to sites south of Assuan. These trips will be by felucca and under field conditions, with canned food and sleeping bags, and will be limited to a maximum of ten persons, with five or six as a minimum. Miss Smith may be addressed at 1840 Grant Avenue, San Francisco.

Other Egyptological News

The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago announces an expedition of twelve or fourteen men under the direction of Professor Keith C. Seele, which will leave in October to undertake salvage, exploration, excavation, and documentation in Egyptian Nubia. The expedition headquarters will be at Beit el-Wali, where the first task of the expedition will be the recording of the temple of Ramesses II, which will ultimately be moved to higher ground. Work will also be undertaken at the Roman temple of Kalabsha, nearby, and a twelve-mile stretch north of Beit el-Wali will be thoroughly explored.

Under the date-line June, 1960, the Tourist Office of the United Arab Republic makes the following announcement: "Tourists who visit the ancient tombs at the Valley of the Kings in Luxor will be able to enjoy the comfort of using escalators which will soon be installed for ascending and descending at the Tombs."